

(Continued from Third page.)

on, bent on reaching my place before the firing became serious. I broke into a run, and pretty soon the pattering of bullets on the ground near me, the little puffs of dust they threw up from the dry ground, made me think that somebody, a number of bodies in fact, were aiming their best at me. However, as I looked at it, there was nothing to do but to go forward, take my chances and reach my post. I did so, getting ahead in an irregular zigzag fashion, hoping thereby to confuse the aim of those that were making me a target.

As I drew near to my post I came within the range of the terrible rife of Snake-in-the-Grass, and I felt pretty sure that certain of the bullets that whistled near me were marks of his special attention. When I came so near the end of my journey that I was running straight toward his favorite spot, I turned to the right and ran swiftly as I could toward the covered way. Reaching the bank, which happened to be on my side of the ditch, I scrambled over it and pitched head first down to the bottom. It was filled as usual with about a foot of water, very muddy. I was going at such headway that I had no control over myself and naturally rolled over and over until I was pretty well soaked through and thoroughly plastered with mud. My comrades seeing me tumble supposed probably that I had been hit, and two or three gathered around me. Sitting up in the muddy pool my first act was to rub the grit from my eyes and clear my mouth, and my first words, addressed to one of my intimate comrades who happened to be of the party were, "Who fired the first shot?" "Snake-in-the-Grass, of course," said he. "All right. I have an account now to settle with him."

It is needless to say that I was mad to the point of foaming. Never before during three years' campaigning had I felt one tinge of hatred of any particular Confederate. Now the concentrated anger at large of three years' development burst in me, and it was directed against Snake-in-the-Grass. He had put me in a tight fix, had made me run as I had never run before, had dumped me into a puddle, so to speak, and filled my eyes, ears and mouth with mud. All this, to say nothing of the countless pocket murders traced to his door, which I swore to avenge. Ugh! what a fate was horrible enough for the wretch—him, the invulnerable? His weight in lead a dozen times over had been hurled at him by the crack shots of our corps. Yet there he was at that moment doubtless gloating over another Yankee gone to his doom.

Back to the post I crawled, where there happened to be, owing to the truce of the day, a small fire burning. There I managed to partly dry my uniform, and by the time the pickets were relieved, which was a couple of hours later, just after dark, I was ready for business.

When the new picket detail came out from camp, I said to the one who was to relieve me that I would substitute for him the next twenty-four hours. One of the members of my relief had shortly before got hold of one of the new repeating rifles just about that time introduced into the army, and I asked him to send it out to me as soon as he got back into camp. It arrived about 9 o'clock with a good supply of cartridges. Snake-in-the-Grass had not been heard from since the time I disappeared from his view heading into the ditch, but I knew his habits so well that I supposed, especially as we allowed the fire to continue to him, that we should hear from him before midnight. In order to come to rescue with him, I adjusted the well-worn rifle of exposing a hat upon a stick in the ditch alongside of the picket pit, moving it up and down so that by the light of the fire he would get sight of it. This was continued for some time without effect. I had taken my place alongside the pit about four feet from it, in a position unbelieved except by perhaps ten or twelve inches of earth. There I lay steadily watching the tree, supposing that if he fired at our dummy I could tell by the flash of his piece about what his position was. The night was just dark enough to obscure small objects, but I could see the outline of the tree. I had watched in that way perhaps an hour, and my comrades despaired of drawing the villain's fire, when all of a sudden there was a report, and a bullet grazed the muzzle of my repeater and barely missed hitting me on the head. Then I knew that Snake-in-the-Grass was there. Evidently he knew that I was there too. His shot had been so sudden and the effect so unexpected that in the confusion I failed to note from what part of the tree the flash came. However, it put me on the alert, and I kept my piece ready for quick aim. The waiting campfire sputtered and flared and at one moment happened to throw up an unusually bright light, when bang went the rife of Snake-in-the-Grass, and my eye happened to be directed at the point whence his flash came so that it seemed to me, although probably it was only imagination, that I saw the outline of his whole figure in the thick foliage of the tree. It could not have been possible, but all the same I steadied my nerves, drew head, and just as fast as I could pulled the trigger. I planted, as I believed, seven good sized bullets in the body of Snake-in-the-Grass. I was also conscious, although probably that was imagination, too, that the body I had seen outlined in the tree at about the fourth or fifth shot had tumbled from limb to limb and reached the ground with a thump. However, as I say, I was not certain so I refilled the magazine of my repeater two or three times and emptied it with spiteful rapidity on that part of the tree where I believed the sharpshooter had been. I lay quietly in my

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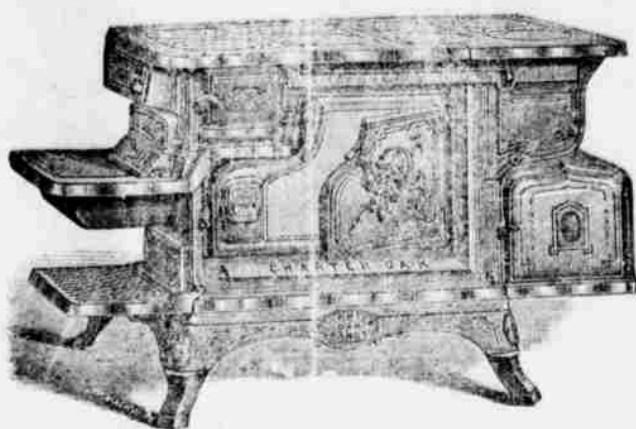
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(Concluded on Sixth Page.)